

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jill A. Pryor, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN, I announce that the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "nay" and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 58, nays 33, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 256 Ex.]

YEAS—58

Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murray
Baldwin	Heinrich	Nelson
Begich	Heitkamp	Pryor
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Isakson	Reid
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Landrieu	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Levin	Udall (CO)
Chambliss	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Collins	Markley	Walsh
Coons	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden
Fischer	Murkowski	
Franken	Murphy	

NAYS—33

Barrasso	Graham	McConnell
Blunt	Grassley	Moran
Boozman	Hatch	Paul
Burr	Heller	Portman
Coats	Hoeven	Risch
Coburn	Inhofe	Rubio
Corker	Johanns	Sessions
Crapo	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Cruz	Kirk	Thune
Enzi	Lee	Vitter
Flake	McCain	Wicker

NOT VOTING—9

Alexander	Hagan	Schatz
Cochran	Harkin	Scott
Cornyn	Roberts	Toomey

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 58, the nays are 33. The motion is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF JILL A. PRYOR TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.J. RES. 76

Mr. REID. Madam President, I renew the request I made earlier this evening.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 220; that a Reid-McConnell-Mikulski substitute amendment at the desk providing emergency appropriations for the Iron Dome defense system in Israel be agreed to; that the joint resolution, as amended, be read a third time and passed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. COBURN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from New Jersey.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise in support of all of the career Foreign Service officers whose nominations have been held up in the Chamber until there is a crisis somewhere in the world, until there is a Presidential or Vice Presidential trip to some part of the world that suddenly demands our attention, and then miraculously holds are lifted and nominees are approved.

On a Thursday, Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 crashed in eastern Ukraine. On the following Monday, the Senate confirmed Michael Lawson as the U.S. Ambassador to the International Civil Aviation Organization. He had been pending before the Senate. His first day on the job, his first time meeting his colleagues, he was forced to grapple with this crisis.

In the last week or 10 days, two more plane crashes have occurred in Taiwan and in Mali, an Algerian plane. Random events around the world cannot determine when the Senate acts on nominees. We cannot continue to follow a policy of confirmation by crisis. It took the President to travel to Saudi Arabia—an important ally—and the Vice President to travel to Chile for the Senate to confirm the nominees to those countries. In the case of Chile, Ambassador Hammer was taken to his new office in Santiago for his first day on the job on Air Force Two because the Senate approved his nomination just before the Vice President was to visit Chile. It should not require flying on Air Force Two to get to your posting for your first day of work as a U.S. Ambassador. Take the case of our Ambassador to Qatar. She waited for months, and then Bergdahl was exchanged for five Guantanamo detainees released to Qatar, and suddenly she was approved. It almost required the President to be "wheels up" on Air Force One on his way to Riyadh before we confirmed an Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

I repeat, the criteria for confirming nominees should not be determined by a sudden just-breaking crisis, with the

urgent need to fill a vacant post. Confirmation-by-crisis is not a strategy. It is not in the national security interests of the United States.

Now the Foreign Relations Committee has moved judiciously—in some cases with record-setting speed—to confirm nominees. In the face of obstructionism on the floor of the Senate, the committee has proven that bipartisanship is not only possible but it can thrive when American national security interests are put first.

It is my view that we must lift up our Ambassadors and their families, not put them down. These individuals are serving our Nation. Their families are sacrificing for our Nation. They deserve better. Our career Foreign Service officers serve Democratic and Republican Presidents. They should not, must not be treated as political pawns.

We cannot continue to allow the pulpits where we preach American values to remain vacant. No Nation can listen to us if we are not present to speak for ourselves. American leadership can only occur if American leaders are present on the international stage.

The Senate standoff that has left so many career Foreign Service nominees in political and personal limbo is damaging our credibility, undermining our national security, and it has to end now.

I rise today for the career ambassadors who have not gotten the decency of a vote in the Senate, career ambassadors who are waiting, along with their families, for months, some more than a year, to take their posts. They are trapped on the Executive Calendar, unable to assume their appointed posts because the leadership on the Republican side has chosen to hold them hostage as a political tool. They have consciously chosen a strategy to do nothing, pass nothing, approve nothing, and leave key diplomatic posts unfilled for months, threatening national security and our ability to conduct foreign policy.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominees: Calendar No. 524, Adam M. Scheinman to be Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation, with the rank of Ambassador; Calendar No. 533, Karen Stanton to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Timor-Leste; Calendar No. 536, Eric Schultz to be Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia; Calendar No. 540, Donald Lu to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Albania; Calendar No. 542, Amy Hyatt to be Ambassador to the Republic of Palau; Calendar No. 544, John Hoover to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Sierra Leone; Calendar No. 546, Matthew Harrington to be the Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho; Calendar No. 548, Thomas Daughton to be the Ambassador to Namibia; Calendar No. 637, Arnold Chacon to be Director General of the Foreign Service; Calendar No. 696, Luis Moreno to be Ambassador to Jamaica; Calendar No. 699, Maureen

Cormack to be the Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina; Calendar No. 707, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, an Assistant Secretary of State of African Affairs, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation; Calendar No. 898, Ted Osius to be Ambassador to the Republic of Vietnam; Calendar No. 902, Gentry O. Smith to be Director of the Office of Foreign Missions and have the rank of Ambassador during his tenure; Calendar No. 927, Leslie Bassett to be Ambassador to Paraguay; Calendar No. 953, George Albert Krol to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan; Calendar No. 954, Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of Bangladesh; Calendar No. 955, James D. Pettit to be Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova; Calendar No. 956, John R. Bass to be Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey; Calendar No. 957, Allan P. Mustard to be Ambassador to Turkmenistan; Calendar No. 958, Todd Robinson to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guatemala; Calendar No. 961, Erica J. Barks Ruggles to be Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda; Calendar No. 962, Brent Robert Hartley to be Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia; Calendar No. 966, Michele Jeanne Sison to be the Deputy Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador, and the Deputy Representative of the United States of America to the Security Council of the United Nations; finally, Calendar No. 967, Michele Jeanne Sison to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, during her tenure of service as the Deputy Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I don't think he is finished with his unanimous consent request.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I appreciate that.

Further, that their nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, reserving the right to object, we used to pass ambassadors and all kinds of people en bloc like that. But we have this nuclear option that the majority chose, so it takes a little longer to do the whole process.

On that basis, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I don't know about nuclear options, but I do know about national security.

When we have objections to some career ambassadors—I am not even talking about other nominees who are equally as important to places in the world where we face a challenge. But when I extract those out of the list that are also pending before the Senate in critical places in the world and just say, my God, if a career ambassador—someone who serves under Democratic and Republican administrations and has committed their life to the service of our country in the foreign service—cannot get to their places, I don't understand.

I don't understand how we can actually object to places like Guatemala where we are having the crisis that we just debated right now. Wouldn't it be great to have a U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala to direct the Guatemalan Government as to our concerns about how children are coming here? Wouldn't it be great to have the Ambassador to Turkey at a time when we have all of these challenges in the region, where Turkey has a huge number of Syrian refugees. And we say we object to those? Or Vietnam, where we are looking at a 123 nuclear agreement and where we are concerned about what China is doing in the South China Sea as it ultimately challenges Vietnam in international waters for drilling purposes? And the list goes on and on.

So let me at least try some. If I can't do them as a bloc, let's see if we can get somebody confirmed here at the end of the day to critical positions.

So let me ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider this following nomination: Calendar No. 968, John Tefft to be Ambassador to Russia, a career ambassador.

Now, imagine if we cannot send a United States Ambassador to Russia in the midst of the enormous challenges.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider nomination Calendar No. 968, John Tefft, Ambassador to Russia; that the nomination be confirmed; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that there be no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to that nomination; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, this is the procedure the majority set up. And the majority is going to be stuck with their decision to delay people, thinking they could speed them up and take away some of the minority rights.

So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, this is not a procedure the majority set up. The procedure that is being set up is one where career nominees and critical nominees are being held on the floor as a procedure that the Republicans have decided to do.

Let me try once again. Let's see whether there is a more important place than Russia.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Mark Lippert to be Ambassador to South Korea, Calendar No. 893; that the nomination be confirmed; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be made in order to that nomination; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, this is a political appointment, not a career appointment. If I objected to a career appointment, I certainly object to a political appointment.

So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MENENDEZ. It is true it is a political appointment, but to the Republic of South Korea. At a time when we are facing challenges in the South China Sea, where there is a dispute between China and Korea, where we have critical interests, where we are dealing with North Korea, we can't have an Ambassador to South Korea?

Let me just say that I could go through a list of critical countries. And it is pretty amazing to me. I have some of my colleagues who have come to the floor to talk about national security. Well, national security isn't only about having a trigger and a gun. National security is also about having an ambassador in a country to ultimately press our case and our concerns as it relates to our bilateral relationship with that country.

So places like Russia, which was objected to, places like South Korea, places like Guatemala, where we are having the crisis, and a whole bunch of African countries that were in the career list—we are going to have the African leader come here next Monday and Tuesday, but we are not going to have ambassadors to a whole bunch of their countries—career ambassadors to a whole bunch of their countries. That is not in the national interests and security of the United States.

I hope that after having waited quite some time in order to finally get to this point where I felt the necessity to come to the floor and ask for unanimous consent, that instead of the trickle that we occasionally get because there is a crisis and therefore there is a response to the crisis, that

we can avoid responding by crisis and having people in places that maybe would help us to ensure that the crisis doesn't take place.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

Mr. CARPER. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. MENENDEZ. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. CARPER. Would the chairman tell us again the name of the ambassador nominated by the President to be Ambassador to Guatemala?

Mr. MENENDEZ. The gentleman who is nominated, a career nominee to be the Ambassador to Guatemala is Todd D. Robinson.

Mr. CARPER. I would say to my colleagues, as chairman of the homeland security committee, I have been down to a number of Central American countries—Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador. If there is anybody that needs a U.S. ambassador down there, it is Guatemala. We see all these young people, not so young people, coming to this country, trying to get in this country. The reason they are coming up here is there is no hope—no economic hope, crime, lack of opportunity—and we have no ambassador there. We haven't had an ambassador there for months.

I would just make a plea for the chairman to make a unanimous consent if only for the Ambassador to Guatemala. And I would just plead with my colleague, my friend from Wyoming, not to object.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I say to my distinguished colleague from Delaware that I already included the Ambassador to Guatemala in my list and there was objection. If the Senator from Wyoming, who I believe is not doing this in his own course but on behalf of his leadership, has an indication that he would accept that, I would be happy to do it; otherwise, I think we would further not be able to achieve it.

Mr. CARPER. I would ask, would the Senator one more time make the unanimous consent request for Todd Robinson.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 958, Todd D. Robinson to be the Ambassador to Guatemala; that the nomination be confirmed; that the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table; that no intervening action or debate or further motions be in order to that nomination; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. We have been through this nomination and the others before. There is a procedure that was set up

that is recognized now by both sides but that our side feels forced into because of the nuclear option where the other side broke the rules in order to change the rules. And the way that works, the majority leader is still the one that has every power within this body—except the Congressional Review Act—and he hasn't chosen to bring these up in the normal order, instead asking to bring them up en bloc.

My college roommate was a career ambassador, and I helped him get assignments and brought a lot of people through en bloc at the same time. But that was before we had the nuclear option.

So on that basis, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I will close on this. Look, the reality is that if each of these ambassadors was going to be brought up and had to go through cloture and go through the whole process of time or the debate time that would be attributed to each one of them, we would spend the rest of this congressional session doing exactly that. That would not help our national security interests in terms of getting these people in place.

I want to get these people in place. I have limited the requests to countries that have career individuals and to countries that also are critical for our national security. I just hope that, in the national interest of the United States, we can come to a better position at some other time.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF JILL A. PRYOR TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked on the Pryor nomination, the Chair directs the clerk to report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Jill A. Pryor, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, would the Senator from Wyoming consider modifying that request to include me to follow on, following his remarks?

Mr. ENZI. Certainly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. COBURN. Reserving the right to object—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Senator RUBIO has been waiting all day to offer a unanimous consent request on a bill he has. I ask unanimous consent that the 2 minutes that Senator RUBIO would like to have be available between Senator ENZI and Senator MERKLEY.

Mr. MERKLEY. I have absolutely no objection to that.

Mr. ENZI. I revise my unanimous consent request for my speech, then Senator RUBIO for 2 minutes, then Senator MERKLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I will be very brief. I want to join Senator RUBIO, if I can have 2 minutes as well, before going to Senator MERKLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the modified request is agreed to.

The Senator from Wyoming.

RETIREMENT OF ROBIN BAILEY

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, the speech I need to give now is not one of my favorite speeches. It is a very important speech.

There is an old saying we have all heard before: Good help is hard to find. Here is my experience: Good help is not only hard to find, it is almost impossible to replace. Those words have come to my mind quite often in the days since my State director Robin Bailey told us she had decided to retire.

As we began our search for a new State director, it soon became apparent that you can't replace Robin Bailey.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:35 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate: